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Study of materials and techniques of teaching reading to culturally disadvantaged children

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A STUDY OF MATERIALS AND TECHNIQUES OF TEACHING READING TO CULTURALLY DISADVANTAGED CHILDREN

by

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INTRODUCTION

WHO ARE THE CULTURALLY DISADVANTAGED?

"In an educational context, 'disadvantaged' refers to children with a particular set of educationally associated problems arising from and residing extensively within the culture of the poor." [1]

One cannot categorically state that the disadvantaged child is a member of any particular race or ethnic group. Frustrations in trying to achieve goals set by society as a whole are experienced by the members of all cultural groups.

In the broad, rapidly increasing ranks of the disadvantaged, must be included the tragic, confused child of our city slums; the pathetic youngsters of rural Applachia and of migrant workers; and the impoverished American Indian child.

In all the vast reaches of these United States, teachers are each year faced with hosts of young, forgotten, forlorn, sad-faced children who have come to be designated as the disadvantaged members of our society.

The growing multitude of their ranks is striking. Altogether, these groups comprise about 15% of the population of our United States. Further, since they usually tend to have large families, their children make up as much as 20% of the child population. [2]

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[1] Joe L. Frost and Glenn R. Hawkes (eds.), The Disadvantaged Child (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1966), p. 1.

[2] Robert J. Havighurst, "Who Are The Socially Disadvantaged?," Journal of Negro Education, (June, 1964), pp. 210-217.

The challenges that the disadvantaged children bring to our public schools each year are paramount. New demands for teacher preparedness, teacher innovations and unique creativity have to be met if the child in the disadvantaged areas is to be given the opportunity to attain his potential.

"No longer can the child be molded to the curriculum. It is time to mold the curriculum to the child." [1]

The teacher of the disadvantaged has to be cognizant of the background factors which necessitate a program of differentiated instruction if he expects any degree of intellectual achievement or social adaptability for his students.

Implications for those who work with them have been recorded by Black and assembled by Metfessel under one general topic he referred to as "learning patterns". The main points he finds to be of vital importance to the teacher include:

1. Culturally disadvantaged children tend to learn readily by the inductive rather than deductive approaches. The difficulties in using the discovery technique in teaching the disadvantaged pupils are obvious.

2. Culturally disadvantaged children generally are unaccustomed to "insight building" by external use of lectures and discussions at home.

3. Culturally disadvantaged children need to see concrete application of what is learned to immediate sensory and topical satisfaction.

4. Culturally disadvantaged tend to have poor attention spans and consequently experience difficulty in following the orders of the teacher.

5. Culturally disadvantaged children generally have had little experience of receiving approval for success in a task. [2]

It must be reiterated that an awareness of the above points is

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[1] R. Sargent Shiver, "After Head Start What?," Childhood Education, Vol. XXXXIV (September, 1967), p. 3.

[2] Millard H. Black, "Characteristics of the Culturally Disadvantaged Child." The Reading Teacher, XVIII (March, 1965), p. 467.

of utmost importance if any teaching technique is to be functional. It is readily apparent that in order for the teacher of the disadvantaged to initiate a program in reading instruction, a great deal of time and effort will be placed on and given to assisting the child to build up an adequate self-concept. Without a positive self-concept very little can be hoped for in the way of progressive inception of knowledge. As Crow and others state, "A child develops a self-concept that often either enhances or defeats itself, depending on the influence of the environmental setting and the people in it." [1] It becomes the duty of any conscientious teacher to furnish some of the experience vital for the establishment and growth of a healthy self-concept on the part of his disadvantaged pupils.

The ideal time to initiate a desirable self-concept is at the pre-school level. The sooner an attempt is begun to assist the disadvantaged child to enrich his environment, the sooner formal instruction in reading can be inaugurated.

One of the most encouraging programs to be enacted to assist the pre-school program of reading readiness is Head Start which will be discussed in the chapter which treats pre-school reading techniques and materials.

In this paper, materials refers to the various types of equipment and materials used in the classroom and playground with learning per se in mind. These will include materials used both by the students and by the instructor. A resume of the materials in this paper include those used in pre-reading situations, those used in instructional reading, and those used in a program of enrichment.

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[1] Lester D. Crow, Walter I. Murray, and Hugh H. Smythe, Educating The Culturally Disadvantaged Child (New York: David McKay Company, 1966), p. 23.

Teacher techniques refers to the various methods used by teachers of the disadvantaged in their ultimate goal of assisting the students in the attainment of their maximum potentiality. As used in this report, techniques, imply the types of skills the teacher employs in his method of basic instruction.

Functional reading instruction embraces the concentration in the middle grades on the more formal tasks of word recognition and meaning. Stress on the development of oral and silent reading skills and on study skills is also characteristic of this stage.

Enrichment refers to refinement of skills and widening of reading interests.

The author is currently teaching in an area comprised predominately of students who compose the group referred to in this paper as culturally disadvantaged. It is due to her interest in the various techniques and materials used successfully in teaching the disadvantaged child that this topic was chosen for exploration.

It is the desire of the author that this resume will be of some functional use in the encouragement of inspirational techniques and innovations for the teacher of the culturally disadvantaged.

The paper is a survey of techniques and materials which have been used with a measurable degree of success by others in the field of instruction of the disadvantaged child in our public school system.

Table 1 contains materials which can be used for pre-reading reading instruction. It will be noted that some materials can be used exclusively by students, others exclusively by teachers, while many can be used by both groups to advantage.

TABLE I

PRE-READING MATERIALS

Materials, Pre-Reading	Used by students	Used by Teachers
Mirror	X	X
Labels	X	
Puppets	X	X
Paper bag masks	X	
Dolls	X	
Blocks	X	
Drawings	X	X
Paintings	X	X
Pictures	X	X
Puzzles	X	
Word games	X	
Alphabet letters	X	X
Tapes		X
Records		X
Charts		X
Filmstrips		X
Overhead projector		X
Chalkboard	X	X
Wagons	X	X
Books	X	X

CHAPTER I

PRE-SCHOOL READING AND THE CULTURALLY DISADVANTAGED

Teacher Techniques

"Since its inception, Project Head Start has offered continuous assistance to communities in developing resources and in establishing their relationship to the focal point of the total program-the disadvantaged child and his family." [1]

Teaching techniques for the disadvantaged are by their very nature elastic and eclectic. The main goal at the pre-school level in programs such as Head Start and other compensatory facilities, is to bring the conceptual development of the child up to his innate level of ability.

One of the unique features of the people involved with the pre-school reading programs has been their awareness of the fact that in order to be able to instruct the disadvantaged, the teacher must be free to develop individual and flexible techniques.

The stress in pre-school programs such as Head Start has been on the acquistion of whole learnings. Most of the efforts of the teacher are directed toward creating an atmosphere which will enable the child to acquire whole learning. The teacher makes use of situations which constitute a part of the normal school day.

Widmer gives the following account of ways in which the situations in a normal school day might be utilized:

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[1] Julius B. Richmond, "Beliefs In Action," Childhood Education, Vol. XXXXIV (September, 1967), p. 5.

> Reading, as an example, is not one isolated period during the day, It goes on all during the day: when a child needs scissors and walks to the box labelled scissors; when a child enjoys the colorful books on the library table table; when the teacher reads a story; when the children write a story, with the teacher's help, about a trip they all took; when the day's activities are discussed and the teacher writes the morning's or afternoon's plans on the board; when a child speaks and listens to the sounds of another's words. Yes, reading and learning go on all during the Head Start day.[1]

Although still in its formative years, Head Start has, as its vital nerve center, the social adaptability of the child to his school environment. One important outcome of Head Start is that it has sought to ease the transition of the disadvantaged child into the more formal situation of the primary grades.

"Hopefully, because of Project Head Start the future for many of these children is brighter and the recent past holds pleasant memories which make them a little more confident as they take their places in the classroom."[2]

Head Start has enabled the child to grow in many areas of self-expression and the results have indicated an obvious growth in self-concept. It has given the opportunity to listen, to learn and to grow. It has removed him from his cocoon of insecurity, ignorance and neglect. Further, it has given him a glimpse into a whole new world of bright and interesting media.

Research clearly indicates the need of a positive self-concept in order for learning to take place. The disadvantaged children are deprived of the very foundations for the development of a self-concept.

It is of extreme importance that the school adapt appropriate

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[1]Emmy Louise Widmer, "HeadStart Kindergarten," Childhood Education, Vol. XXXXIV (September, 1967), p. 25.

[2]Richmond, loc. cit.,

techniques and approaches in the transition years from pre-school on through the elementary school years to assist the disadvantaged child aclimate to the school environment.

"New programs utilizing new methods and materials geared to changing quality rather then quantity are needed." [1]

Research is emphatically in agreement on the importance of pre-school programs. Piaget has referred to the malleability of the young child in the stage he classified as "preoperational stage." [2]

> It is in the transitional years from the preschool period through the elementary school years that the child is first subjected to the influence and the requirements of the broader culture. It is then that two environments are always present for him: the home environment and the school environment. But it is also in these transitional (and especially in the pretransitional) years that the young organism is most malleable. Thus, that is the point at which efforts might best be initiated to provide a third-and-intervention-environment to aid in the reconciliation of the first two. Such reconciliation is required because, especially for the child from disadvantaged background, there are wide discrepancies between home and school milieus. In the intervention environment, preventive and remedial measures can be applied to eliminate or overcome the negative effects of the discontinuities.[3]

It is obious that the school is the agency that will be operative in providing the stimulation and maturation techniques to facilitate the instructional processes of the child of the deprived masses.

The very nature of the problem places an emphasis on the fact that the teacher must treat these children as individuals and every effort must be made to see that they in turn are given an opportunity to relate to the teacher individually.

Cohen reiterates the importance of the treatment of the child from deprived areas as individuals when he states:

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[1] S. Alan Cohen, "Some Conclusions About Teaching Reading to Disadvantaged Children," The Reading Teacher, XX (February, 1967), p.435.

[2] Martin Deutsch et al., The Disadvantaged Child, (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1967), p. 66.

[3] Ibid.

> One particular approach to teaching reading to all culturally deprived children is not the answer to their reading retardation. Culturally deprived children are human beings. They are members of a species made up of individuals with different learning styles. That means they must be taught as individuals.
> Through, continuous, quality instruction will teach culturally deprived children to read. A high intensity learning program in which content, level, and rate are adjusted to individual needs has worked every time this author has tried it with socially disadvantaged children and youths. [1]

Educators concur that the child of the deprived areas are vitally handicapped in their language development. It is desirable that a rich and highly individualized language development be fostered during the pre-school years. Children should be encouraged to ask their questions in complete sentences and the teacher in turn should set the proper model by answering in proper grammatical sequence.

Since language is the framework upon which basic reading skills are built, listening and speaking skills are highly relevant in the preschool experiences methodically planned by the teacher.

Anticipating the future needs of the disadvantaged students, the effective teacher stresses techniques and methods which allows the child to learn from listening to ease the way for verbal expression later on.

"At all levels of maturity, the child's mastery of the language and particularly his listening comprehension put realistic limits to his reading comprehension." [2]

Through the media of records, and stories, the children could be assisted in the acquisition of some of the basic concepts that are familiar to their middle-class peers.

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[1] Cohen, op. cit.

[2] Albert Harris, Effective Teaching of Reading (New York: D. MacKay Co., 1962), p. 238.

Expedient use should be made of tape recorders and sound systems to help compensate the child for his lack of language ability. There should be provision for constant feedback of proper word usage by both student and teacher.

Deutsch, in treating the language training program appropriate in the pre-school environment, emphasizes the necessity of repeatedly placing words in meaningful context situations. He believes that multiple opportunities should be provided for adequate language expression and responses appropriate to the situation present in the class at the time. [1]

Techniques used successfully to implement the language problems make use of sensory and manipulative devices which appeal to the child's curiosity and which lead naturally into experience stories.

A definite attempt should be made for the child to interpret various signs, labels, names and charts placed in the classroom. The teacher has the role of a guide which requires infinite patience in regard to the gross immaturities of the disadvantaged pupil.

> More specifically, stress could be placed on the following areas: orientating feedback, so that if the child says "give me the___" or "where is__," the teacher consciously instructs him in complete sentences as to direction, location, placement, context, etc.: the systematic attempt to increase vocabulary; allowing the child to sort symbols, pictures, and artifacts with letters and words; verbal labeling practice; relating objects and experiences verbally, for example, constructing stories using specific objects and events; every child completing differently incomplete stories suggested by the teacher; reinforcing and encouraging the simultaneous articulation of motor behavior. Through the verbal area it is also very possible to train memory, to some extent to train auditory discrimination, and to improve environmental orientation. [2]

In pre-school readiness programs it is important to sustain curiosity once it has been initiated. A continuing attempt must be

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[1] Deutsch, op. cit., p. 71.

[2] Ibid.

made to engage the child as an active participant in the learning process, rather than allowing him to be a mere recipient of a static school experience.

A recent study gave the following account of ways in which oral language skills can be developed and improved through techniques of training:

> (1) the provision of a favorable environment whereby the child will be encouraged to develop self-expression, (2) a keen awareness of good language patterns introduced through familiarity with children's literature, (3) the structuring of good language through techniques devised for this purpose, (4) the development of improved awareness in variations in sounds and (5) the stimulation of improved auditory discrimination and auditory memory.[1]

It is important that the teacher supply experiences that are pertinent to the class of disadvantaged children in that particular classroom. The problems of school orientation are different for a migrant child who has, traveled too much and for a city slum dweller who has traveled too little. Field trips and excursions should be appropriate to the needs of the students.

"Curricula which simply present a cafeteria of experience and experiences which do not include some direction, cannot be expected to succeed-or to accomplish much-in ameliorating the school learning disabilities manifested by the disadvantaged child." [2]

Due to the great need for the disadvantaged child to develop concepts, the teacher should seize every opportunity for him to reproduce in his own way experiences which have been meaningful to him. To accomplish this, the creative teacher makes use of large blocks,

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[1]Sister Cora Marie Cielocha, "Effectiveness Of A Planned Oral-Language Orientated Readiness Program In Developing Readiness For Children In A Culturally Deprived Area." (unpublished Master's thesis, The Cardinal Stritch College, Milwaukee, 1967), p.24.

[2]Deutsch, op. cit., p. 161.

crates, and constructive devices. The vast array of manipulative objects furnish a media through which the child can share his experienced joy in his new world.

Table 2 contains a list of materials which can be used by both the teacher and the student in beginning reading instruction. The materials include those used by teachers engaged in teaching of reading in the disadvantaged areas and materials suggested by the regular classroom teachers.

TABLE 2

BEGINNING READING MATERIALS

Materials, Beginning	Used by Students	Used by Teachers
Books, basal	X	X
Books, supplementary	X	X
Construction paper	X	
Dictionaries, picture	X	
Puppets	X	X
Rolling reader	X	
Language master	X	
Drawings	X	X
Paintings	X	X
Pictures	X	X
Puzzles	X	
Word games	X	
Tapes		X
Records		X
Controlled Reader		X
Syllablescope		X

CHAPTER II

BEGINNING READING AND THE CULTURALLY DISADVANTAGED

Teacher Techniques

It is of utmost importance that the teacher be consistent in structuring the program of the beginner in reading so that the acquistion of reading skills will be developmental and sequential in nature. Therefore, beginning reading instruction should follow and build upon a foundation hopefully initiated in the pre-school program.

In a message to Congress last February, President Johnson stated:

> The achievements of Head Start must not be allowed to fade. We have learned another truth which should have been self-evident.... that poverty's handicaps cannot be easily erased or ignored when the door of first grade opens to the Head Start child.... follow through is essential. [1]

If the situation merits it, it would be advantageous for the child to be introduced to multi-ethnic basal readers. Research indicates the fact that too many of our basal readers are written with a middle class vocabulary with middle class standards highlighted as concepts. It is small wonder then, that the child of the city slums, the member of the various minority groups and the migrant children find it impossible, foreign and uninteresting to identify or relate to our reading texts.

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[1] Joyce M. Huggins, "Follow-Through Program in First Grade," Childhood Education, volXXXIV (September, 1967), p. 27.

Many teachers, when faced with the impossibility of obtaining the texts written expressly for children of a mixed background, have taken the time and effort to write little stories of their own deplicting neighborhoods and locales with which the child can identify. Experience stories dictated to the teacher by the students have proven an invaluable technique for initial reading in the various areas where the child has been from a deprived area.

One teacher hit upon a unique method of motivating beginning reading in her disadvantaged classroom situation. She devised her own stories on primary chart paper. At the bottom of the story she cut a little door and fastened it with masking tape. Behind the door she hid a variety of surprises depending upon the type of story. The children read the simple story after the teacher had read them and then opened the door to see the surprise. Inexpensive little plastic animals, pictures, and drawings constituted most of the surprises. Once they became proficient the children were able to follow through with stories of their own. The teacher called this type of story Peek-A-Boos. [1]

The appeal of many original stories can be greatly enhanced by the use of children's drawings and enlarged photographs. Even after the transition to formal reading from books, the need, desire, and the value of the experience chart reading does not vanish. There exists a continuing need for them both for language development and conceptual guidance. Further, children will profit from the socialization and ego nurturance so lacking from the personality of the disadvantaged child.

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[1] Ester Levin, "Rewarding the Beginning Reader," The Elementary School Journal, LXVIII (December, 1967), p. 131.

Why are educators so concerned about the language development of first graders in the disadvantaged areas? Studies indicate clearly that lack of language ability has a definite bearing upon future reading problems. In one study conducted in seven elementary schools in Washoe County, Nevada, it was determined that a difference of over one year (1.2) was found to exist between comparable groups of first graders, one from a low socioeconomic group and the other from a higher socioeconomic group.[1]

Language development, as used in this report is defined as the ability to comprehend both the auditory and visual symbol, to relate to them in a meaningful way; and to express ideas in a verbal manner.

The language barrier is a crucial problem which must be coped with if the disadvantaged student is to undertake beginning reading with any degree of success.

In a reading program for Mexican-American children in Texas an experiment was conducted that was referred to as a Second Chance. Oral language practice was stressed. One technique which proved to be both motivating and profitable was the use of a magnetic board with a variety of figures which the children could manipulate, talk about and even compose little stories about. The continuous exchange in English between the students and the teacher served to reinforce the reading programs in the first and second grades in which this program was conducted. An interesting feature of this program was that as barriers of communication between Mexican-American pupils and their Anglo-American teachers was bridged, the students wrote compositions about their pride in their Mexican ancestry and the cultural conflicts

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[1]Stinson E. Worley and Willeam E. Story, "Socioeconomic Status and Language Facility of Beginning First Graders," The Reading Teacher, XX (February, 1967), pp. 401-402.

they had endured in their first formal schooling. Again, the reader will realize that the development of the self-concept is important to the success of the disadvantaged child.[1]

In the beginning reading program the teacher of the disadvantaged is faced with the problem of motivation. Motivation for reading should be immediate, consistent and persistent. The most motivating factor in the beginning reading stage is the insightful teacher who begins where the child is in reality, not where various test scores place him. It is still not likely to find a valid test for the disadvantaged child.

"Conventional group I.Q. tests cannot profitably be utilized. Poor language facility on the part of the youngsters precludes validity. It is generally agreed that a culture-free I.Q. test has yet to be developed." [2]

The most noteworthy technique that the teacher can employ is that of creativity and versatility. The successful teacher is not one who is rigid and curriculum encased. The successful teacher is one who has the foresight and basic intelligence to change immediately to an entirely different technique if and when the occasion demands it for the sake of the students. In teaching disadvantaged children there is no excuse for a teacher who is static.

In the use of the experience method which is recommended as the only fair method of beginning reading instruction for these children, it is very important that the teacher is discreet in how the child is made to understand that his word and the proper word might not coincide. The teacher must provide the exodus for the child out of his

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[1]Deck Yoes, Jr., "Reading Programs for Mexican-American Children of Texas," The Reading Teacher, XX (January, 1967), p. 313.

[2]Frost, loc. cit. , pp.251-252.

language handicap.

One technique which suggests itself, is that of paraphrasing by the teacher. The child is encouraged to dictate his own language pattern, and the teacher prepares a second chart story with corrections when they are expedient. The teacher tactfully indicates the different word charted in what might be referred to as 'school language'.

The above method was used in one of the schools involved in what has become known as the CRAFT PROJECT. This was an experimental program in beginning reading in selected first grades in Negro ghettos in Harlem, Bedford, Stuyvesant and South Jamica.[1]

The importance of this technique is that it affords an avenue of approach for the correlation of the listening, speaking and writing skills. Here again, the important door to formal reading is being opened by the student with the teacher as guide not an authority imposing reading upon the child.

Since beginning reading experiences involve the entire class, some teachers have capitalized upon the fact of participation by using unit plans at this stage. The unit could be a common trip or excursion, a specific country or state, a classroom pet or project. A class of first graders should have little difficulty in deciding on a type of unit, if guided properly and profitably.

In such a reading program it is important that a parallel effort be exerted to develop a language facility through audio-visual media, such as records, films, filmstrips and tapes. Discussions by the teacher and the students about the unit are vital to the program. Various uses of art and music can be introduced depending upon the

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[1]Educational Policies Commission, Education and the Disadvantaged American (Washington, 1962),.

type of unit.

Even though it is desirable to use the unit plan with the idea for the unit being pupil orientated, teacher prepared units can and have been used with sucess.

Unit teaching was used in the Hall School of North Minneapolis with beginning readers comprised of children of disadvantaged areas.

> Against that neighborhood background, the first of the supplementary units was developed around a shopping trip to a supermarket. The material dealt with weight and measurement. The initial story sequence concerned itself with two boys from the same classroom, white and Negro, who met on the way to the supermarket. . .
> In various situations each boy in the story was able to impart new information to the other. Words such as quart, pint, ounce, dozen, liquid, and dairy are all used in the story line as natural elements of a shopping trip. The pictorial representations in this unit proved to be most effective in themselves.[1]

One of the greatest assets of the unit plan for the beginning reader is that it affords an excellent opportunity for vocabulary reinforcement and enlargement so necessary to the disadvantaged student. By unit teaching it is often possible to provide a guide for continuity in reading about the topic under consideration in the unit proper.

Another asset of the unit plan of teaching is that it offers the beginner a chance for immediate success. This removes the stigma of the disadvantaged child's feeling of being out of step with his peers. "To sustain the child's interest in learning to read, it is imperative to help him to achieve auccess quickly." [2]

In beginning reading instruction the teacher should design the instruction around the knowledge that:

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[1]Frost, loc. cit., p. 326.

[2]Levin, loc. cit.

Language-handicapped children need first of all a program designed to improve their knowledge of English. A preparatory instructional period ordinarily should be devoted to three simultaneous activities: first, to building up a basic vocabulary for understanding and speaking: second, improvement of facility in oral communication: and third, providing a background of meaningful experiences.[1]

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[1]Guy L. Bond and Miles A. Tinker, Reading Difficulties Their Diagnosis and Correction (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1957), p. 429.

CHAPTER III

FUNCTIONAL READING AND THE CULTURALLY DISADVANTAGED

Teacher Techniques

Initially, the first techniques of the teacher in the area of functional reading development ahould involve consolidation. The teacher should strive for mastery in one skill before the next phase is introduced. Speed is of little if any importance in working with the disadvantaged child. To expect him to achieve in a manner typical of the middle class peer groups is not plausible or sensible.

> An effective and appropriate teaching strategy for the culturally deprived child must therefore emphasize these three considerations: (a) the selection of initial learning material geared to the learner's existing state of readiness: (b) mastery and consolidation of all ongoing learning tasks before new tasks are introduced, so as to provide the necessary foundation for successful sequential learning and to prevent unreadiness for future learning tasks: and (c) the use of structured learning materials optimally organized to facilitate efficient sequential learning. [1]

The teacher of the disadvantaged must display a sensitivity to the needs of the student yet it is imperative that the teacher remain at all times in control of the class. It is vital that teaching techniques be carried out in an orderly and structured manner. The teacher should be aware of the frustrations of the student but rapport is a necessary facet of any instructional task.

Medley divided the teacher's performance into three broad categories: "(a) his means of controlling the class, (b) his approach to the content, and (c) the interpersonal climate he creates." [2]

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[1] Frost, loc. cit., p. 238.

[2] Ibid, p. 347.

Because of the negative self-concept so apparent in the child from the disadvantaged areas, the teacher must be cognizant of the need for immediate success and reinforcement. The disadvantaged constitute a dependent group and often will revert to carelessness and even apathy toward achievement.

Although there are some who disagree emphatically, one of the most successful teaching methods to offer immediate success experiences and reinforcement, is the use of self-pacing and programmed materials. If the teacher is particular and follows the instructions properly, it is almost a certainty that the child will begin at his proper reading level. His reward is his knowledge via self-correcting and scoring, that he has comprehended what he has read.

Foremost among teacher techniques should be sufficient repetition with stress on overlearning and feedback on the part of the student. Again, it is important that the teacher is constantly aware of the fact that the disadvantaged child learns at a slower rate and that provisions will be granted for self-pacing to help substaniate his work in the areas of functional reading.

> The principle advantage of programmed instruction, apart from the fact that it furthers consolidation, is its careful sequential arrangement and gradation of difficulty which insures that each attained increment in learning serves as an appropriate foundation and anchoring post for the learning and retention of subsequent items in the ordered sequence. [1]

Most teachers place emphasis upon the methods and techniques that they feel serves best to motivate the child. Self-pacing methods are a good source of motivation because they are, by their very nature, a method of developing intrinsic motivation. Any technique which has one of its vital goals, that of motivating the reader,

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[1] Ibid, p. 239.

should be given a definite place in the curriculum in any reading program, particulary the program for the disadvantaged. Frost says:

> "The development of cognitive drive or of intrinsic motivation for learning, that is, the acquisition of knowledge as an end in itself or for its own sake, is the most promising motivational strategy which we can adopt in relation to the culturally deprived child." [1]

It is at this stage of reading development that the child will feel the sting of being placed in a specific reading group. Much of the introduction to reading at the functional level can, and should be done by the class as one group. When grouping is vital for indevidual needs, it is essential that the groups be flexible yet structured. The disadvantaged student reacts favorably to a well-ordered classroom.

Harris stressed the need for the class group to be elastic when he says that "grouping for functional reading can often be in heterogeneous groups especially if a project or activity unit plan is followed." [2]

In ungraded groups, the child often receives motivation to learn because he does not feel that he is noticeably void of any of the basic skills. Very often the introverted child will respond surprisingly well in an ungrouped situation.

Functional reading techniques have to have a specific objective. The skills demanded of the child at this stage require a great deal of work and initiative. The teacher will find she will not only have to make use of commercially prepared materials, but she will have to devise many of her own.

Again, the teacher will have to bear in mind the fact that the

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[1] Ibid, p. 241.

[2] Albert Harris, How to Increase Reading Ability (New York: D. McKay Co., 1961), p. 128.

disadvantaged child will progress at a slower pace. Every attempt must be made to guide the student in the task at hand before he is expected to function on his own. Concrete examples at his level of achievement are imperative.

The author has found that making charts deplicting a Table of Contents, Indexes and Card Catalog were helpful in introducing the type of information they contained to the students. This type of graphic representation with oral explanations should preclude any attempt to have the student proceed unassisted.

> Planning of the study skills program should be keenly cognizant of the significance of pupil personality and attitudes toward study practices.
> By reviewing the research on successful experiments in teaching skills, several general principles can be formulated. The training must be interesting and realistic to students as opposed to extended practice or drill in artificial tasks. Relationships between desirable skills and habits and the daily applications in the tasks of classroom should be obvious to pupils. Thus the most practical training matter is that drawn from the pupil's current study materials, whenever possible.[1]

It is the responsibility of the teacher to furnish the student with a reason for his development in the functional reading areas. The disadvantaged student is practical minded and readily seeks a reason for an educational task or chore. The student should be made to see that such skills as locational and informational tasks, will be an asset to him in school content areas and in the pursuit of a living out of school. Simple yet honest answers often tend to motivate him into the mastering of the type of skill to be learned.

Table 3 contains a list of suggested materials which have been used by students and teachers in the in area of functional reading skills.

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[1]George D. Spache, Toward Better Reading (Champaign: Garrard Publishing Company, 1963), p. 326.

TABLE 3

FUNCTIONAL READING MATERIALS

Materials, Functional	Used by Students	Used by Teachers
Books, basal	X	X
Books, supplementary	X	
Reading laboratory kits	X	
Study skill kits	X	
Dictionaries	X	
Drawings	X	X
Pictures	X	X
Workbooks	X	
Phonic skill supplements	X	
Language master	X	
Tapes with earphones	X	X
Records	X	X
Charts	X	X
Filmstrips	X	
Overhead projector	X	X
Movie camera		X
Controlled reader		X
Notebooks	X	
Stage settings	X	

Harris says that "efficient study habits can be taught and learned." [1]

Strict adherence to workbooks is not recommended by most reading authorities. It is a well-known fact that they contain much of value and it would be wise if the teacher would make use of the material contained in the workbooks when, and if, it is pertinent to the skills that are being taught. Many teachers find it advantageous to compile a file of various workbook materials. Never should workbooks be used as mere busy work.

Functional reading attempts to teach the student a variety of reading skills which include -- reading for information, reading to get the main idea, reading to follow directions, and reading to remember.

Even though the reading tasks are more involved at the functional level, many techniques can be devised by the classroom teacher to make the instructional periods much more intriguing. A sterile setting is not conducive to learning.

One of the most successful types of materials which is readily available to most teachers is the daily newspaper. It serves as a good source of vocabulary development and reinforcement. It is also an excellent tool for teaching skimming and location of the author's main idea and intention. Critical reading skill development can be introduced by the efficient teacher in a manner of interest to the child.

Since the reader is concerned with the disadvantaged learner, it is very important to make use of the newspaper in the classroom because it is highly probable that the student does not have access to a daily paper at home. Schools in many deprived areas receive free copies of the newspaper and it would behove the teacher to make in-

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[1]Harris, Effective Teaching of Reading, p. 453.

quires to determine if the service is available to the area served by them.

> If any lesson warrants thoughtful preparation, it is this one. It trains children in the skill of reading two of democracy's most important media of communication-the newspaper and the news magazine. Since there is general dislike in a democracy for having someone else do the individual's thinking, teachers must teach children to be discerning when they read the newspapers, to obtain precise, instead of vague and sketchy, information.[1]

The CRAFT PROJECT referred to earlier in this paper, was an experiment which sought to use various media in the instruction of reading. The conclusion drawn from the experiment was that the basal reader approach resulted in greater gains in the area of reading comprehension. The value of the experiment is that it furnishes an insight into various techniques which can be used profitably by the teacher for teaching the disadvantaged student. The various methods and materials used did have a positive favorable affect upon pupil attitude, so vital to the learning situation. Used for the sake of preventing a dull and uninteresting method of instruction, many of the techniques used by the teachers in this experiment can and should be employed at this stage of reading as well as at some others.

Much use was made of the overhead projector in the CRAFT PROJECT. Children's pictures were transferred to transparencies and used as a basis for discussion of lessons, noticing details, predicting outcomes, seeing cause and effect, and sequence of ideas. Records were used in the functional reading program. They were used to facilitate memory, recall and for summary work. Extended writing and speaking exercises were made possible via the tape recorder. Use was made of both teacher and commercially made materials. [2]

Record players and tape recorders can be used with earphones

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[1]Lillian Gray, Teaching Children to Read (New York: Ronald Press Co., 1965), p. 349.

[2]Educational Policies Commission, op. cit., pp. 51-53.

thereby allowing the teacher to work with other groups without distraction. These devices can serve as self-pacing programs by carefully selection and preparation on the part of the teacher.

Disadvantaged children find the material in content areas to be almost overwhelming at times. It is vital that the teacher attempt to adapt the curriculum to their level of achievement in the initial stages of instruction.

> In schoolwork, few areas place as many demands on reading as the content fields of social studies, science, arithmetic, and so on. Different reading techniques are demanded by each content field, and these techniques must be taught in the period set aside for the subject. No matter how excellent the instruction in basic reading, children will need additional definite guidance in handling curricular reading, and some children will need more guidance than others. [1]

Here again the teacher should make use of the audio-visual aides available. Content areas have highly specialized vocabularies which can be developed via graphic materials such as charts and graphs.

Future generations are going to be challenged to the mastery of terms unheard-of in this age. It is the task of the teacher to see that the student is supplied with the techniques of that mastery. It is the task of the teacher of the disadvantaged student to see that he is supplied with the background vocabulary which will enable him to compete in the world of tomorrow with his more fortunate peer group members of the middle class.

Functional reading techniques are often the most neglected of the teacher techniques because so much time has to be spent in the tasks of initial and developmental reading skills. It is here that teacher skill and ingenuity plays such an important role. The groundwork for functional reading must be made in the elementary school because it will be virtually impossible for the student to acquire the basic skills without a background when they arrive at the secondary school level.

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[1] Gray, loc. cit., pp. 330-331.

CHAPTER IV

ENRICHMENT AND THE CULTURALLY DISADVANTAGED

Teacher Techniques

"Essentially, enrichment is an extension of the reading program, an extension that allows time for applying skills and for developing skills in depth." [1]

Enrichment implies longitudinal growth of the individual in the area of reading. The teacher concentrates on extending the reading taste and interest of the student. The essence of enlightenment for the child of the disadvantaged area lies in enrichment, not acceleration.

An experiment was conducted in two New Haven public schools to compare the effect of acceleration and enrichment on the achievement of school grades from different socioeconomic background groups. The one group followed the suggested enrichment activities in the manual for the basal reader, the other group used acceleration and covered two textbooks, doing only the basic lesson plan procedure. The conclusion drawn from this experiment was that the program of enrichment resulted in greater gains in reading achievement, in mastery of basic skills, and in the degree of independent reading. [2]

It is indicated that the teacher should make use of the many suggestions that are available to her in the various teacher manuals.

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[1] Nicholas P. Criscuolo, "Enrichment and Acceleration in Reading," The Elementary School Journal, LXVIII (December, 1967), p. 142.

[2] Ibid., p. 145.

This does not mean that all the suggested activities should be followed in a strict lock-step procedure. A brief inspection by the teacher will furnish a variety of methods and teaching techniques that may be used to help the disadvantaged student to widen his scope of interests and reach nearer to his potential.

"In addition to the developmental exercises there is an assortment of ideas for independent activities that will give youngsters opportunities to pursue existing interests, to cultivate new interests, and to satisfy a variety of talents." [1]

The aim of the the teacher in enrichment activities is to help the student acquire habits and interests in personal reading which will help him adjust to the demands of our changing environment. Some effective ways of increasing the amount and quality of children's personal reading include the following:

1. Reading aloud selections that are above pupil's reading level, that illustrate various literary forms and styles of writing, that introduce outstanding authors and their works.
2. Arousing interest in books in the library tables by introducing the characters and/or setting of a story, by sharing interesting bits of information about a selection, by reading aloud several well-chosen paragraphs that set up the story's theme or plot.
3. Encouraging pupils to discuss books they have read, to exchange recommendations of books they especially enjoyed, to keep cumulative lists of recommended books with a brief statement about the nature of each one, to plan a round-table discussion of ideas and information gained from personal reading, to pursue interests aroused by selections in their basic readers. [2]

Table 4 is composed of a list of materials which can be used by the student and the teacher in the area of enrichment. It will be noted that more equipment can now be used expressly by the student than heretofore.

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[1] Helen M. Robinson et al., Vistas: Guidebook (Chicago: Scott Foresman and Company, 1965), p. 21.

[2] Ibid, p. 42.

TABLE 4

ENRICHMENT READING MATERIALS

Materials, Enrichment	Used by Students	Used by Teachers
Books, basal	X	X
Books, supplementary	X	X
Reading laboratory kits	X	
Drawings	X	X
Paintings	X	X
Pictures	X	X
Language master	X	
Tapes with earphones	X	
Records	X	X
Filmstrips	X	X
Overhead projector	X	X
Movie camera		X
Controlled reader	X	X
Stage settings	X	
Television	X	X
Radio	X	X
Crafts	X	
Displays	X	X
Bulletin boards	X	X
Word games	X	

Because of the need for the disadvantaged student to enrich his vocabulary, one of the most frequent techniques suggested is to organize material appropriate to specific interests, such as keeping of a notebook of specialized vocabulary which may be particular to that type of reading. This should be an on-going type of program which the student should find to be profitable in the technical world in which he finds himself.

There must be a sincere effort on the part of the teacher to allow the students to share the books or stories they have enjoyed with their classmates. This could be down through various media. Unique reporting methods include dramatizations, puppet shows, improvised radio and television productions and the use of illustrations. There is nothing as dull and static as sterotyped book reports. It is essential for the sake of motivation to employ a variety of techniques in book reporting.

Bulletin board displays utilization by both the teacher and the students can be used as a method of stimulation of reading interests. Teachers can obtain much valuable information on bulletin boards from various teaching magzines and from suggestions of school librarians.

It is vitally important for the teacher of the disadvantaged to attempt to assist the student to widen his scope of interest. One of the most successful techniques for this is to practice asking pertinent questions of the student and by arousing their natural curiosity to the point where they will seek research materials to answer those questions.

Teacher guidance should help the student perceive time and place relationships. This can be done by allowing them to make comparisons and to cite other works which they have read on the same

subject.

The therapeutic effect that such branching in related literature has upon the individual is often unpredictable. This might constitute an emotional success in the life of the disadvantaged youngster. "As the child reads literary selections, he is bound to encounter characters who have had problems similar to his and who have successfully solved these similar problems." [1]

The teacher should set as example for the children to emulate in the choice of books to read in addition to assigned material. This requires a type of super salesmanship. It is a good practice to select interesting selections of a book to read to them, and then to stop at the point of high interest to attempt to stimulate the student to desire to continue the reading on his own.

If the teacher feels inadequate in dramatizing a book, very often there are people available within the school who are adept at that very task. School librarians often are very good story tellers and are often only too happy to come into the classroom for the purpose of a book review.

Even if the school has a library, it is very important that the classroom contains a number of books on a variety of subjects. It is advisable that the teacher arrange many of these books according to the needs and interests of her students. This information can be obtained by oral or written questionnaires as to the type of books they would like to read.

> The development of interest in reading is a growth area of grave importance. Of what value are all our efforts to establish proficiency in the basic skills of reading if children do not make the fullest use of these skills to enrich their lives, both as children at present and as adults later on? Permanent carry-over interest in reading has long been stated as the ultimate goal

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[1] Nila Banton Smith, Reading Instruction for Today's Children (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1965), p. 389.

> of all reading instruction
> We need to develop discriminating readers: readers who will choose to read those things which will contribute most to their lives culturally, socially, and informatively.[1]

The enrichment stage of reading instruction serves as a fertile field for the integration of the language arts. Extended use should be made of creative writing experiences in the sharing of outside reading interests. Needless to say here again, the reader will see the important current of ego enhancement underlying many of the teacher techniques in the enrichment stage. The student who is able to share is the student who is able to gain in both rapport and in informational insights in the era of socialized living.

The teacher of the culturally disadvantaged has a duty and an obligation to concentrate on a sincere effort to establish a well rounded program of enrichment for the students. It should be one of their instructional goals to encourage youngsters to reach for higher and higher levels of reading maturity. The maximun effort should be to assist the student to raise their levels of achievement closer to their levels of aspiration. Again, it needs to be stressed, that in the case of the disadvantaged child, the progress in the positive direction is by nature, going to be slow. The teacher must not set the standard of the class too high. It is imperative to establish realistic goals for the students.

Extending interests in literature can be used in the improvement of attitudes toward other races, cultures, and creeds. This is a splendid opportunity for the teacher of the disadvantaged children to capitalize on stories which deplict types of people with similar problems as those in the classroom. An understanding of others and the development of personality are cultivated via extended reading

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[1] Ibid., p. 387.

experiences.

Good literature is one of the best weapons teachers can use against the passive competition offered to our youth today in the form of mass television. Never before in history has the pursuit of knowledge been so challenged by the more sedentary interests of radio, television and movies. It is the primary challenge of the classroom instructor to instigate a program so diversified and exciting, that the student will not be tempted to rely on mechanical devices alone to seek information and entertainment.

The phase of reading instruction referred to as the phase of enrichment must not be confined to one stage of reading instruction. It is a prime requirement that the goals of enrichment be sought all through reading achievement. It is an important aspect of any really balanced reading program.

One of the recommended procedures for the teacher is to take advantage of teacher workshops when they are extended to her. Many school systems offer many institutes and workshops in reading. Courses in teaching reading to the disadvantaged children are rapidly coming to the fore front. There is surely much to be gained from the practical sharing of ideas of others in similar teaching circumstances. In the general field of enrichment, it would behove the teacher to keep abreast of the vast field of children's literature.

To summarize: it can be stated that literature contributes to all around personality development through the promotion of understandings, by improving attitudes, behaviors and tastes, by helping in the solution of personal problems and by the stimulation of creativity. Actually, no other material offers such unique possibilities for the nurturing and shaping of the individual personality. [1]

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[1] Ibid., 391.

To neglect the enrichment stage of reading is to neglect the student himself. We cannot possibly choose to neglect the already neglected child of our multitudinous disadvantaged ranks.

Research attests to the fact that it is the teacher who, in the long run, is the most influential aspect in the education of the child. The teacher and the skills and techniques they bring to their classrooms are the keystones of learning. Enrichment is dependent upon teacher skills and creative techniques.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

THE ROLE OF THE TEACHER OF THE CULTURALLY DISADVANTAGED

Many innovations have been offered and are in the process of completion in regard to the techniques and methods of successfully teaching of the disadvantaged students. The last five years have witnessed extensive programs of pre-school instruction, crash remedial programs, extended school days and other types of compensatory education.

However; these programs are only as functional as the individual who is responsible for their initiation and use in the classroom. The teacher of the disadvantaged must be sympathetic toward the weaknesses of the students and aware of the strengths they possess. It is the obligation of the teacher to establish positive goals which are within the realm of possibility of immediate achievement for the student.

If the teacher finds that the training he has had is not adequate, it is his responsibility to make a serious and sincere effort to up date himself both emotionally and professionaly for the very difficult job ahead.

> The beginning solution, . . . must stem from our teacher training institutions. We must work out a whole new system of pedagogy geared to the teaching of children from low-income families. Teachers must be fortified with knowledge of many kinds about low-income culture-particularly its strengths, such as its attitudes toward education, its inventiveness, its cooperativeness. But this learning must not be limited to the reading of relevant material from the behavioral and social sciences. Contemporary movies, workshops in Negro history, the learning of Spanish, or an understanding of the language of the streets would all contribute sharply to the teacher's "sensitivity training" toward low-income groups. [1]

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[1] Frost, op. cit., p. 342.

Let the teacher be aware of flexibility in style of teaching. Let him ask himself how he can best reach his students. It may be that he will have to adopt a type of role. If this is necessary, it is his responsibility to do so. The teacher of the disadvantaged may find it to be advantageous to actually identify with the students in order to prelude any attempt at formal instruction. Again, it is vital to be discreet at all times. Because of the problems presented by this type of student, a different and rather informal technique is often more successful than the more conventional one.

The conclusion is obvious that we can no longer expect to continue down the path of conformity and uniformity in our teaching methods in regard to the disadvantaged child. It is the task of the school teacher to adapt both curriculum and technique of approach to the needs of the individual. This issue must be faced now, not in the generations to come. It is time for education to open its doors to a vast number of its population who heretofore have been shamefully barred from the true acquisition of knowledge.

> But if the presently disadvantaged child is not to be fettered by his ignorance, not to be relegated to the ranks of the unemployable in a society which provides increasing opportunities to the academically competent and has less and less room for the functional illiterate, then the school has a central role to play. And central to the school, to the development and achievement of the child, is the teacher.[1]

It is not to be implied that the teacher of the disadvantaged is to be some type of gifted personality. Most successful teachers in the conventional middle class school can and do make successful teachers of the disadvantaged children. All types of ingredients that go to make a good teacher are applicable here, only perhaps the teacher will have to expend more and expect less as to immediate compensation.

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[1] Ibid., p. 361.

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APPENDIX

Federal Aid for The Disadvantaged

Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 P.L. 89-10)

Title I	Purpose	Better schooling for the educationally deprived. Includes also; handicapped children, children of migrant workers, "neglected" and "delinquent" children in publicly supported institutions, and American Indian children attending schools operated by the Bureau of Indian Affairs.
Title II	Purpose	Funds allocated for school library resources, textbooks, and other instructional materials for use by teachers and students in public and private elementary and secondary schools.
Title III	Purpose	Grants for educational and learning materials centers and services to help local school districts develop Projects to Advance Creativity in Education (PACE).
Title IV	Purpose	Grants for (1) survey, research, and demonstration projects: (2) curriculum research and development projects and laborities at colleges and universities: and (3) training of researchers for education.
Title V	Purpose	Grants to assist states in strengthening the resources of state education agencies and to assist those agencies in the establishment and improvement of programs to meet the educational needs of the states.
Title VI	Purpose	Grants to assist states initiate programs for the education of handicapped children at the preschool, elementary, and secondary school levels.

Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 (p.L. 85-452)

(Head Start)	Purpose	To provide an action program to prepare the children from culturally deprived families for school entrance. Goal is aimed at the improvement of health, self-confidence, and verbal and conceptual skills of the child.

National Defense Education Act of 1958 (P.L. 85-864)

Title III	Purpose	Provides money for strengthening elementary and secondary instruction in civics, economics, English, modern languages, geography, history, mathematics, science, and reading. Money is for instructional materials and equipment, and building remodeling.

Higher Education Act of 1965 (P.L. 89-329)

Title V	Purpose	Reach and teach children in schools located in areas with a high concentration of low-income families.

Education of The Handicapped (P.L. 88-164)

Title III Sec. 302	Purpose	Prepare leaders and others who work with handicapped.

Civil Rights Act of 1964 (P.L. 88-352)

Title IV	Purpose	Assist school districts in effecting desegreation.